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good analytical table of contents, but the index, though full, shows many signs of haste. The annotations are exceedingly well done, and throw light on many obscure allusions. Taken altogether, the work reflects much credit upon the editor and upon the society which publishes it.

FRANK GREENE BATES.

ALFRED UNIVERSITY.

The Aaron Burr Conspiracy. By WALTER FLAVIUS MCCALED, New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1903. — xix, 377 pp.

This is the latest and most scholarly contribution to a puzzling and apparently much misunderstood episode of American history. Many of the facts here presented are drawn from original and hitherto unused sources which the author discovered in the Spanish archives at Mexico City, the American archives at Washington, and the Spanish records at San Antonio. The conclusions which he reaches with regard to the nature of the conspiracy differ in important respects from the usual view of historians, which is based chiefly upon Burr's correspondence with Merry and Yrujo, the ministers of Great Britain and Spain respectively, to whom he ostensibly disclosed his willingness to serve as the instrument for effecting the separation of the disaffected West from the Union. Dr. McCaleb believes that he has found sufficient evidence to justify the view that Burr's disclosures to Merry and Yrujo were designed to deceive those ministers. Burr's real designs, according to the author, were against the Spanish possessions in the southwest, and in order to secure funds for this undertaking he represented to Merry and Yrujo that disaffection was rife in that section and that with proper leadership it could be induced to separate from the Union. Believing that Great Britain and Spain would lend ready ears to any project which looked to the disruption of the Republic, Burr proposed to take the initiative in bringing about the secession of the West, and asked that British and Spanish subsidies be placed at his disposal to aid in carrying out the scheme. His real purpose, however, was to invade the Spanish dominions in the southwest. The author characterizes Burr's correspondence with the British and Spanish ministers as a gigantic piece of imposture, intended to hoodwink them into supplying him with funds for quite another purpose than the disruption of the Union. This correspondence, therefore, upon which Henry Adams and others have chiefly relied for proof of Burr's treasonable designs, throws no light upon the real nature of the conspiracy except in a negative way. The secession

contingent in the West, the author thinks, was too inconsiderable to command notice. As to prominent characters involved in the affair, he expresses the view that Jackson was throughout absolutely loyal, but General Wilkinson he characterizes as a shameless villain and an imposter without a parallel in our history. His analysis of the trial at Richmond is lucid and critical. The acquittal of Burr, he says, followed as a matter of course, no other result being possible in view of our law of treason. Accompanying the book are two maps prepared by Burr, showing the lower region of the Mississippi and a survey of the gulf coast from New Orleans to Campeche.

J. W. GARNER.

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Heredity and Social Progress. By SIMON N. PATTEN. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1903. — 214 pp.

To a biologist, the first reading of a book like the volume under review gives the impression that a new humorist of a somewhat novel type has arisen. A second reading arouses intense indignation, but reflection finally shows that an earnest and well-meant but unsuccessful attempt has been made to apply the terms and principles of a branch of science with which the author is unfamiliar, to the elucidation of phenomena in another branch with which he is equally unfamiliar. To a biologist, the result, in the present case, is confusion followed by amusement, and to a psychologist the result may well be similar.

At the outset the author directs attention, in an interesting and novel statement of the case, to the "social surplus" and its relation to heredity, and propounds the question: "How is the social surplus transformed into permanent conditions and mental traits?" The question is answered in the first three chapters in an equally interesting and novel way. The principle of inheritance of acquired characters is applied as follows (pp. 23 and 32):

When, for example, a bricklayer has improved his condition by the acquired characters of his occupation, and has, as a consequence, bettered the position of his children, they tend to become clerks and mechanics. . . . It is well known that the children of any class move into the class above them when the economic welfare of parents is so improved that children have more food, shelter, and leisure.

The order of the change from acquired to natural characters is: first, the production of surplus energy through acquired characters; second, the expression of this energy in the secondary characters; third, the discovery of some use for these secondary characters in which all the species